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THE HUNGARIAN FEDERATION OF TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC
SOCIETIES

Our Federation consists of 25 learned societies promoting scientific and technical knowledge. The Federation was founded in 1948; some of its societies are almost 100 years old; the newest was set up three years ago.

At the end of 1958, the Federation had a membership of 44,300; 17,500 of them were university graduates. In one year, the membership grew by 11,000. There are eight FTSS branches outside Budapest, consisting of 100 local society-groups. The societies have besides 90 provincial and factory groups.

The Federation and its societies publish 36 technical and scientific journals. The Műszaki Élet and Ipargazdaság are central periodicals. Other important journals published by the societies are: Magyar Kémiai Folyóirat/Hungarian Chemical Journal/; Magyar Kemikusok Lapja/Hungarian Chemists' Journal/; Fizikai Szemle/Physics Review/; Bányászati és Kohászati lapok/Mining and Metallurgical Journal/; Földtani Közlemény/Geological Journal/; Elektrotechnika/Electro-technique/; Energia és Atomtechnika/Energy and Atomic Technique/; Mérés és Automatika/Measurements and Automation/; Híradástechnika/Telecommunications/; Magyar Építőipar/The Building Trades/; Magyar Textiltechnika/Hungarian Textile Technology/; Ágrártudomány/Agronomy/; etc.

In 1958, a total of 2500 public lectures were held throughout the country.

The Federation pursues its activity independently of state agencies. It co-operates with institutions and agencies treating problems related to technical and scientific development, like the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Council of Science and Higher Education, the competent departments of the Ministry of Education, the development departments of the industrial ministries, research institutes, etc.

The nature of this cooperation is such that the scientific and state agencies give consideration to the opinion of experts engaged in the various specialized fields as jointly evolved in the scientific societies, e.g., in the societies they discuss and appraise plans of ministerial decrees and plans concerning technical and economic problems. They arrange scientific conferences and symposia in conjunction with the state and official agencies. The Societies popularize new achievements of research and assist in implementing them in practice through lectures and publications.

The Federation cooperates closely with the Ministry of Education as far as the training of scientific and technical specialists are concerned. For instance, the problem of developing technical education was thoroughly discussed by a broad group of experts active in the societies prior to official measures being taken in this respect. The Federation submitted recommendations to the Ministry of Education which gave them careful consideration.

Since the post-graduate training of engineers has become a problem of world-wide significance, we arranged public discussions on the subject. The official measure was drafted on the basis of the recommendations arising from these extensive discussions.

Defense of economic interests taken in the strict sense of the term is outside

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the scope of our Federation. These problems are handled by the competent unions and the Engineers and Technicians Council of the TUC, which was organized at our initiative. Our Federation collaborates with the Engineers and Technicians Council.

During 1958, international participation in our conferences was good. Major gatherings held were the 50-year jubilee conference of the Society of Hungarian Chemists, the International Measurements Conference, the conference on corrosion, the leather conference, the symposia on physics, that on elementary particles being of major interest, the symposia on mathematics, and some others.

There were 977 foreign delegates attending the conferences and symposia, including 183 from West European countries; 327 foreign delegates read papers.

Our Federation sent 287 delegates to congresses and conferences abroad with 58 of them going to West European countries.

Of course, bodies in Hungary other than our Federation, especially the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, arrange technical and scientific congresses. During 1958, 1113 specialists who are members of our societies visited technical exhibitions and industrial fairs abroad, as part of group study trips organized by our Federation.

Our societies are affiliated to eight international organizations and take an active part in their work.

We moved into new headquarters early last year. They are far more suitable for the activity of our societies since there are several lecture rooms, club rooms, etc., in the building. We also succeed in convincing factories and institutions interested in scientific work to allocate, as affiliated bodies, considerable funds for the work of our societies. Therefore, we have no financial difficulties and are well provided for in all respects. Consequently, our scientific societies have been broadening their activities: apart from arranging lectures, courses and conferences, organizing working groups to study scientific problems, they have recently organized many more exhibitions and study trips in Hungary and other countries than ever before. This increased activity has placed great burdens on our full-time officials so we are thinking of enlarging our staff. The involvement of young scientific workers and engineers in activity, is a relatively weak feature of some of our societies, despite the fact that the number of graduates leaving our universities has greatly increased during the past few years. Only some of the societies involve a good proportion of them in activity, e.g., the physicists, mathematicians, certain branches of chemistry and the textile industry, but few are made use of in the societies of the building trades and electrical industry.

Although the figures of our membership show a considerable increase over the past few years, we cannot be fully satisfied with it. We believe it is a major task in the ensuing years to involve an ever greater number of highly-trained technical and scientific workers in the activity of the societies so that the work may be improved.

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